

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EA/K:RGRICH,JR.:JCM
APPROVED BY EA:RHOLBROOKE
EA - AMBASSADOR GLEYSTEN
S/S-O - MR. VALERGA

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O 102355Z JUL 78 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE

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NODIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PGOV, KS, US

SUBJECT: KEEPING THE DOOR AJAR ON KIM DONG-JO TESTIMONY

REF: SEOUL 5836

1. FOLLOWING FAREWELL DINNER BY ROK AMBASSADOR KIM YONG-SHIK FOR AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE GLEYSTEN JULY 8, GLEYSTEN DISCUSSED OUR CONTINUING CONCERNS OVER CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON KOREA-RELATED LEGISLATION AND THE NEED OF BOTH ETHICS COMMITTEES TO HAVE SOME INFORMATION FROM EX-AMBASSADOR KIM DONG-JO.

2. CONTRARY TO KOREAN RESPONSES REPORTED IN REFTEL, AMBASSADOR KIM YONG-SHIK INSISTED THAT THE ROKG OFFER MADE TO JAWORSKI REMAINED OPEN, ALTHOUGH NO NEW
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INITIATIVE WAS CONTEMPLATED.

3. SINCE IT IS NOT CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD ON THE HILL AT PRESENT THAT THE KOREAN OFFER IS ON THE TABLE, WE ASKED KIM IF IT WAS NOT FEASIBLE FOR HIM TO MAKE THE ROKG POSITION MORE COMPLETELY KNOWN THROUGH SOME DIRECT COMMUNICATION WITH THE CONGRESS. STRESSING THE IMPORTANCE

OF THE NEXT FEW WEEKS IN AVOIDING DEFEATS TO THE ADMINISTRATION'S PROGRAM REGARDING KOREA IN THE CONGRESS, IT WAS PROPOSED THAT AMBASSADOR KIM WRITE THE HOUSE LEADERSHIP TO EXPRESS REGRET THAT JAWORSKI HAD BEEN UNABLE TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSALS EARLIER OFFERED, BUT TO INFORM THE LEADERSHIP THAT THESE PROPOSALS WERE STILL CURRENT.

4. WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED TODAY, JULY 10, THAT IN RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR KIM'S RECOMMENDATION TO SEOUL THAT HE BE PERMITTED TO MAKE SUCH A COMMUNICATION TO THE CONGRESS, THE ROKG HAD EXPRESSED DOUBTS AND RAISED A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS. AS WE UNDERSTAND SITUATION, ROKG FEELS IT SHOULD NOT COMMUNICATE FURTHER ON THIS ISSUE WITH HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES AFTER THE REBUFF REPRESENTED BY THE ADVERSE PL-480 VOTE. QUESTIONS POSED TO THE EMBASSY FOCUS ON THE NEED FOR ANY FURTHER STEPS AT THIS TIME.

5. BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT THAT TO EXTENT POSSIBLE YOU REINFORCE IN SEOUL OUR EFFORT HERE TO PERSUADE ROKG THAT AS A MINIMUM IT SHOULD CLEARLY REAFFIRM THAT ITS PREVIOUS OFFER REGARDING COMMUNICATION WITH KIM DONG-JO REMAINS OPEN AND THAT IT WOULD BE PREPARED TO COOPERATE IN THIS FASHION IF USEFUL TO THE RESPECTIVE HOUSES OF CONGRESS. IN ORDER TO BE MOST CREDIBLE, THIS CONFIDENTIAL

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MESSAGE SHOULD GO DIRECTLY TO CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP, IF POSSIBLE BY LETTER.

6. YOU MAY POINT OUT THAT THERE ARE A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT MEASURES BEFORE THE CONGRESS IN THE NEXT TWO TO THREE WEEKS AND WE ARE NOT CONFIDENT OF THE OUTCOME IF A POSITIVE EFFORT IS NOT MADE BY ROKG AT THIS JUNCTURE. WHILE THE MILITARY EQUIPMENT TRANSFER AUTHORITY MAY BE FAIRLY SAFE FROM THE POLITICAL FALL-OUT OVER KIM DONG-JO'S TESTIMONY, THAT MAY WELL NOT BE THE CASE FOR THE FMS CREDITS. FURTHERMORE, IT WOULD BE FOOLISH TO DISCARD THE CHANCES FOR PL-480 WHEN THIS MAY YET BE DEALT WITH CONSTRUCTIVELY BY THE SENATE, LEADING TO REEVALUATION OF THE HOUSE POSITION WHEN THE ISSUE GOES TO CONFERENCE.

7. GLEYSTEN MET WITH SENATOR STEVENSON JULY 10. ON THE BASIS OF THAT MEETING WE ARE RATHER PESSIMISTIC OVER PL-480 PROSPECTS IN THE SENATE IF THERE IS NO ROK GESTURE TO BREAK THE PRESENT MOOD OF IMPASSE.

8. ALTHOUGH CHANCES FOR SUCCESS MAY NOT BE

PARTICULARLY HIGH, YOU SHOULD MAKE A RENEWED EFFORT TO PERSUADE ROKG THAT IT SHOULD CLEARLY AT LEAST MAKE ITS OFFER KNOWN AND OPEN THE DOOR TO FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF A SOLUTION ON THE KIM DONG-JO PROBLEM. THIS WILL SUPPORT THE RECOMMENDATIONS WE BELIEVE AMB. KIM IS MAKING TO SEOUL AT THIS TIME.

9. TIME IS DEFINITELY OF THE ESSENCE. NOT ONLY ARE KEY VOTES BEFORE US IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS, BUT BOTH ETHICS COMMITTEES WILL BE CLOSING OUT THEIR BUSINESS LATER THIS SUMMER. IF FINAL REPORTS BLAME THE ROKG FOR LACK OF COOPERATION, THEN THE SPILLOVER OF THIS EPISODE TO CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES IN THE FUTURE WILL INEVITABLY BE GREATER THAN OTHERWISE WOULD BE THE CASE.
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